

Report for 2001GU1303B: Water Resources Symposium on the Outbreak of Cholera in Pohnpei State, FSM.

- unclassified:
 - Heitz, Leroy F., Sharing Experiences of the Recent Cholera Outbreak and Where Do We Go From Here, Proceeding of Cholera Conference held at Pwohmara Beach Resort, Kolonia, Pohnpei, FSM WERI, University of Guam, (Web based Cd Rom).

Report Follows:

PROJECT SYNOPSIS REPORT

Project Title: Water Resources Symposium on the Outbreak of Cholera in Pohnpei State, FSM

Problem and Research Objectives

Cholera outbreaks have occurred repeatedly throughout the islands of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Outbreaks occurred in Chuuk State in 1983 and in Pohnpei State in April of 2000 causing 20 deaths. The cause, as reported by Pohnpei's cholera outbreak task force, was water and food contamination.

The University of Guam Water and Environmental Research Institute of the Western Pacific sponsored a conference titled "Sharing Experiences of the Recent Cholera Outbreak and Where Do We Go From Here?" This conference was held at the Pwohmaria Beach Resort in Kolonia, Pohnpei, FSM on August 7-8, 2001.

The primary goal of this conference was:

- 1) to create an awareness of cholera itself among the FSM community and,
- 2) to share information on the causes and best practice for outbreak preparedness and ultimately prevention.

Principal Findings and Significance

The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. Philippe Calain, Medical officer for the Global Task Force on Cholera Control World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Calain was in Pohnpei during the recent Cholera outbreak. Various key members of the Pohnpei Task Force made presentations. These included representatives from the FSM Department of Health, Education and Social Affairs, The Pohnpei State Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Pohnpei State Hospital, Pohnpei State Department of Health Services, the Pohnpei Utility Corporation, and the FSM National Red Cross. Each gave presentations on their roles as members of the Pohnpei State Cholera Task Force. All commented on their perceived success of the preparedness and prevention plans that were adopted. Three representatives from the environmental protection and public health agencies from each of FSM states were also invited to attend the symposium. Each discussed their state's response to the Pohnpei epidemic and their plans if a similar cholera outbreak should strike their island. There were also presentations on the inter-state and inter-country economic impact and trading problems that resulted from various shipping bans that were imposed during the epidemic.

This conference was a wonderful opportunity for key players in the medical and public health fields throughout FSM to gather, discuss and devise plans to combat this most dreaded disease which as one presenter stated "It is not a question of whether we will have another epidemic. It is a question of when and where it will happen."